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Conceptualising care – a gender lens on contemporary developments

Professor Sue Yeandle

CIRCLE

Centre for International Research on Care, Labour & Equalities

University of Sheffield, UK

s.yeandle@sheffield.ac.uk

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Overview: gender issues in a changing world of care

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- **Shifting sands**
- **The big picture**
- **Some indicative data**
- **Framing the developments**
- **Future positive?**

Shifting arrangements for care in Australia

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- **Aged Care Reforms**
- **NDIS**
- Implications for older and disabled people
- Implications for carers and families
- Implications for care workers / services
- Will technology transform experiences of care?
 - *Care giving, care receiving, the work of care*
- **Autonomy and independence – realistic policy goals?**
 - *Values: Interdependence and co-operation? ‘Resilience and self-mastery’? Gender, race, class....*

Shifting arrangements for care in the UK

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- **Austerity measures**
 - *Since 2010, after GFC*
- **Care Act 2014**
 - *Wellbeing and prevention principles*
- **Support for carers and families**
- **Implications / consequences for care workers / services**
- **Privatisation**
 - *of formerly public services*
 - *plus emergence of novel consumer services / products*
- **Technological 'solutions' (?)**

Care in ageing and diverse societies

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Global context

- **Increased longevity** - *care required by the very old*
- **Longer lives of people with LTCs and disabilities**
- **Diversity of populations**
- **Urban / rural contexts and consequences**
- **Mobilities and migration** - *more frequent and complex*
- **Culture – values, varieties, interconnections – convergence?**

Care provision and receipt: Australia and the UK

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Caring / caregiving ('informal care')

- De-feminising? new gender divisions?
- Role of race, ethnicity, culture, class?

Receiving / managing care and support ('care users')

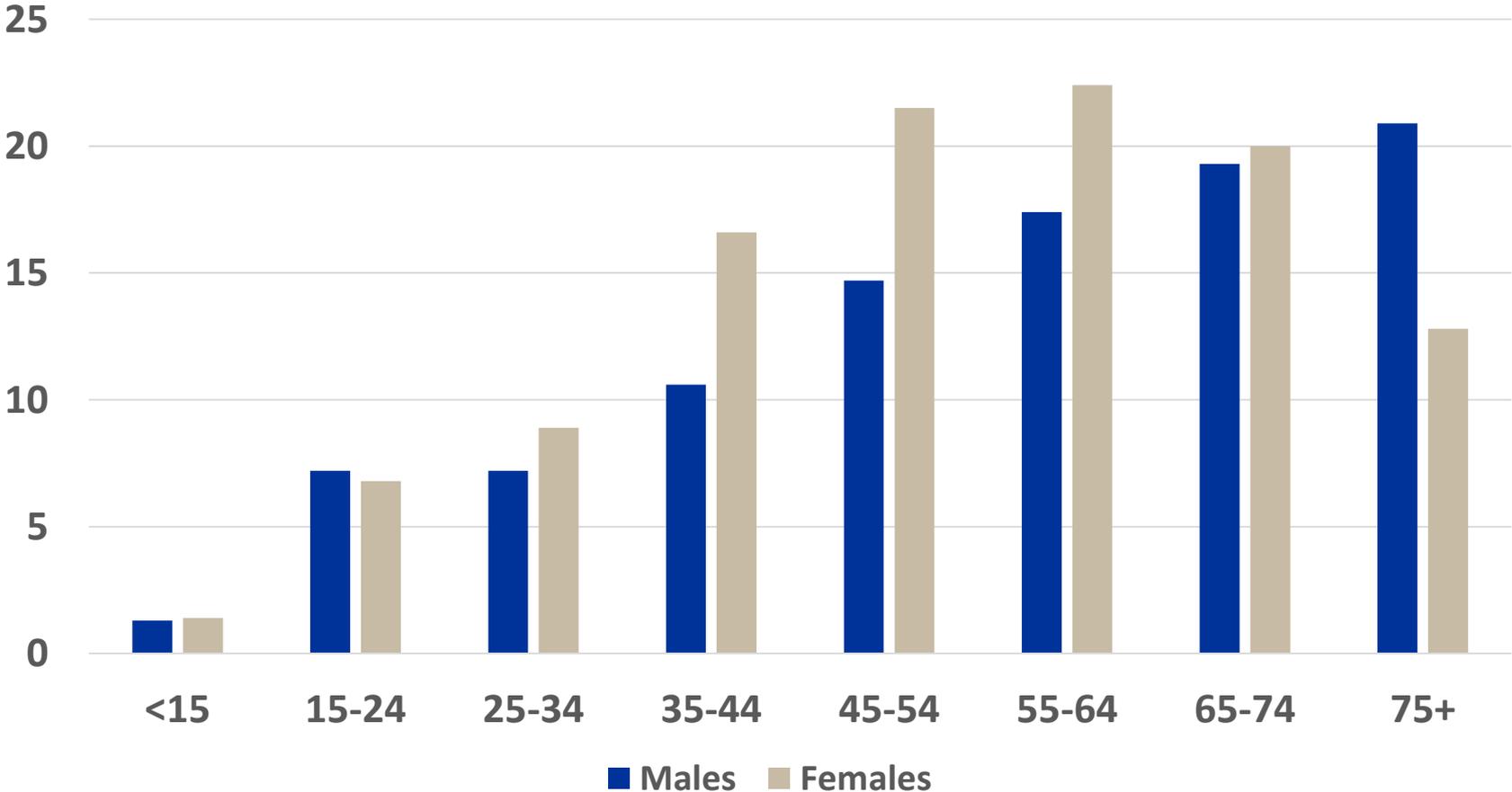
- Growing complexity/variety of care and support requirements
- Are technologies displacing (some) need for human input?

Care workers / personal assistants

- Employed / self-employed / remunerated
- Support with ADLs, specific tasks, to enable societal participation

Varieties of care: relational, transactional, reciprocal

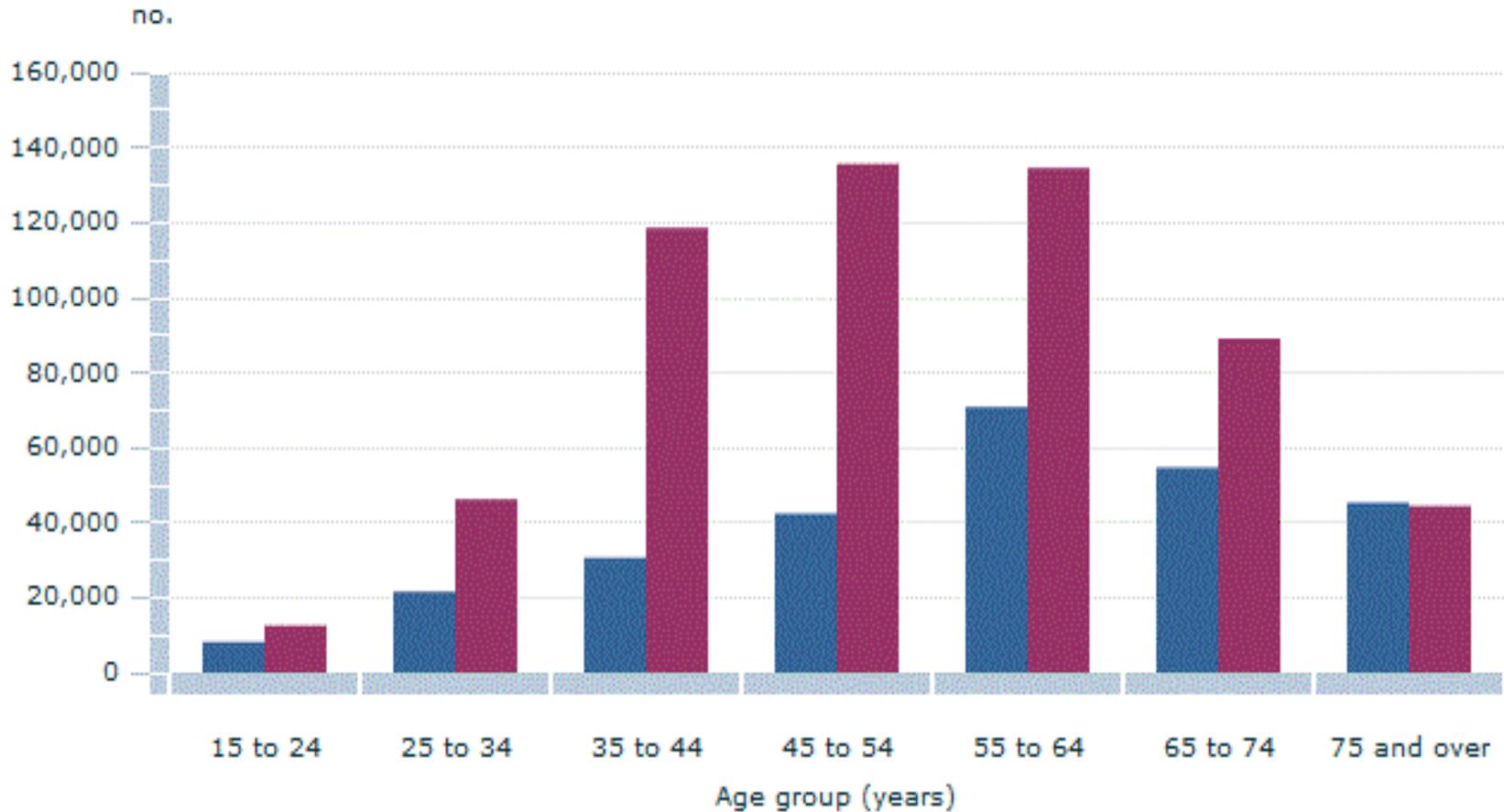
Australia: all carers, by age and sex, 2015



Source: ABS 2017, SDAC 2015

Australia: primary carers by age and sex, 2015

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 Males
 Females

Source: ABS 2017, SDAC 2015

Australia: primary carers: sex, age, relationships (%)

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Age	Partner of recipient	Child of recipient	Parent of recipient	Other relationship
MALES				
15–24	*	*	*	*
25–44	36	31	13	17
45–64	41	36	10	10
65+	84	5	4	5
FEMALES				
15–24	*	*	*	*
25–44	12	21	55	11
45–64	28	35	27	10
65+	68	11	12	8

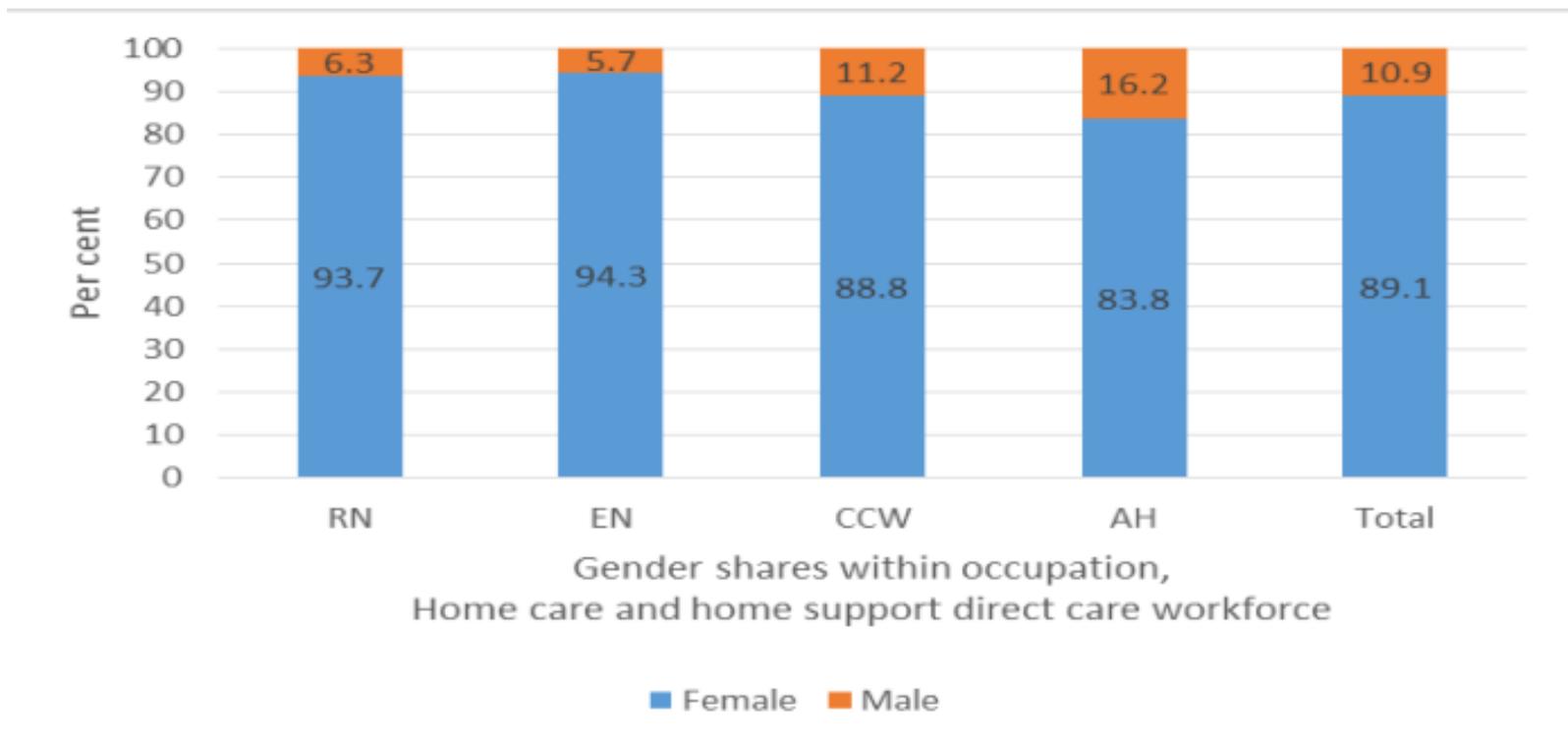
Source: ABS SDAC 2015 Table 38.3 - *= estimate, based on available data, 'unreliable'

Australia: care workers

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- Aged care sector – female dominated, though % of males is growing
- In residential aged care, 87% of workers are female; in home care/home support, 89%¹

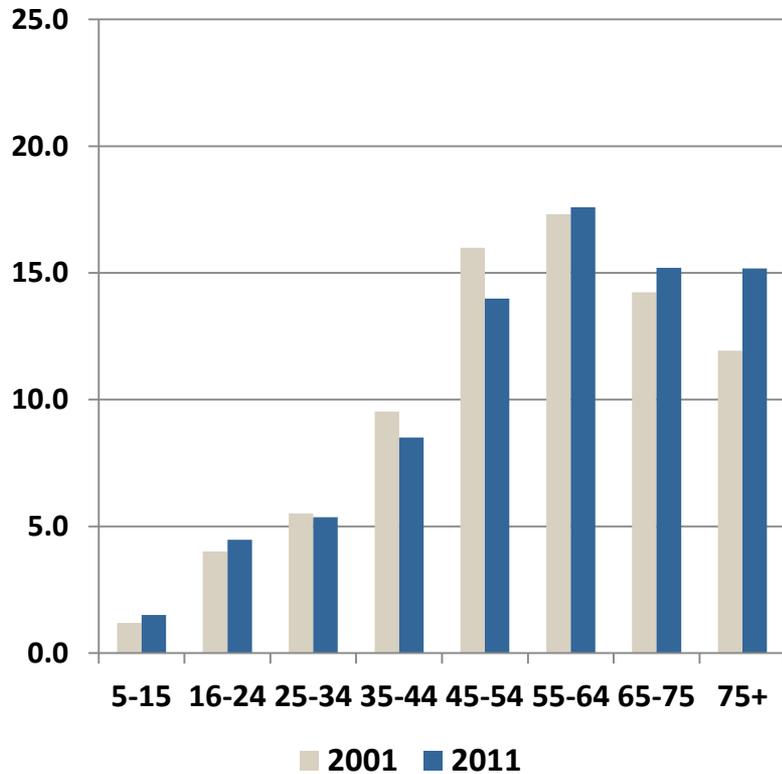
Gender distribution of home care & home support aged care workforce: 2016 (%)



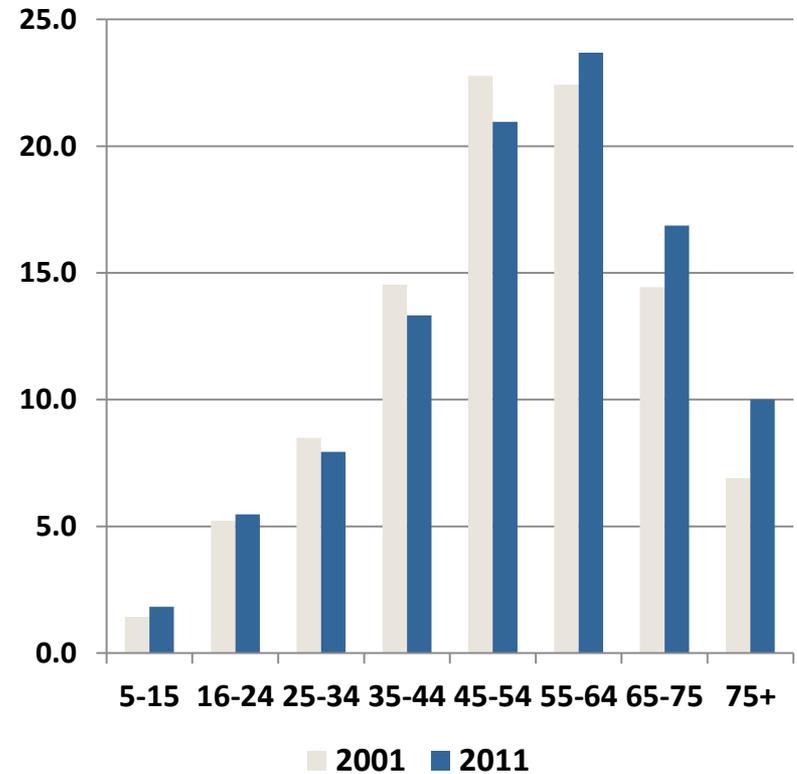
1. https://agedcare.health.gov.au/sites/g/files/net1426/f/documents/03_2017/nacwcs_final_report_290317.pdf

Carers in the UK population, by age and sex

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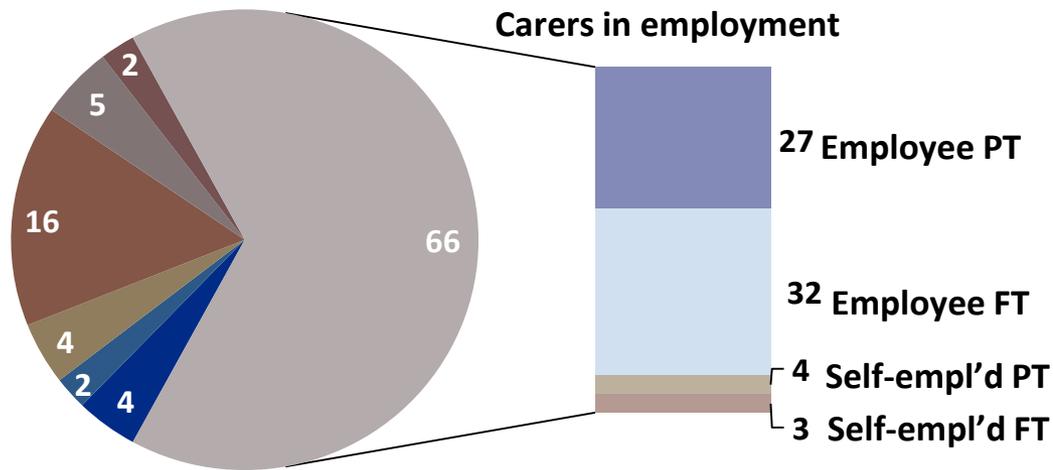


% of MALES who are carers (UK)



% of FEMALES who are carers (UK)

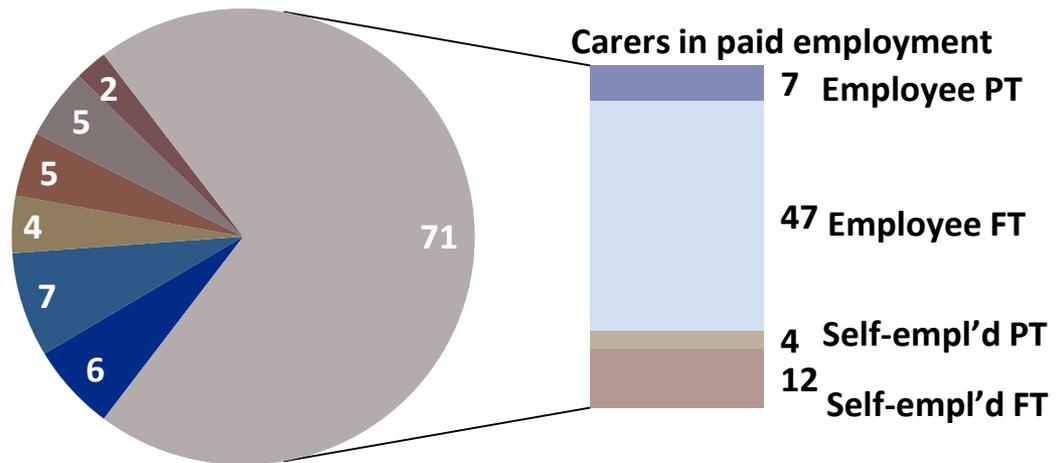
EMPLOYMENT STATUS of CARERS of WORKING AGE, 2011 (England & Wales)



FEMALE carers of working age by economic activity status, England & Wales, 2011

- Unemployed
- Early retired
- Student
- Looking after home/ family
- Long-term sick/ disabled
- Inactive Other

MALE carers of working age by economic activity status, England & Wales, 2011



- Unemployed
- Student
- Long-term sick/ disabled
- Early retired
- Looking after home/ family
- Inactive Other

England: relationship of carer to main cared for person

Relationship <i>person cared for is the...</i>	Where care provided		Time spent caring each week		All carers
	Same household	Other household only	< 20 hours	20+ hours	
Parent	19	48	39	26	33
Parent-in-law	3	12	10	4	7
Grandparent	1	7	6	2	4
<i>All the above</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>67</i>	<i>55</i>	<i>32</i>	<i>44</i>
Spouse / partner	51	1	13	41	26
Child	22	3	7	19	13
Other relative	3	11	10	4	7
Friend or neighbour	1	18	14	3	9
Other	1	1	1	1	1
Base: All (no. respondents)	1,100	1,100	1,100	1,100	2,200

Source: Health & Social Care Information Centre. **Survey of Carers in Households, 2009-10**, England

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“Home care is a vital part of our economic infrastructure.”



Source: Koehler (2014) 'Key to Care', Burstow Commission on the future of the home care workforce
<https://www.lgiu.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/KeyToCare.pdf>

Some theoretical framings (1)

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- **Paula England (2005)**
 - ▣ 'Emerging Theories of Care Work' *Annual Review of Sociology*, Vol 31 381-99

- **Women's Budget Group (2016)**
 - ▣ 'Plan F: a feminist economic strategy for a caring and sustainable economy' <https://wbg.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/PLAN-F-2015.pdf>

- **Joan Tronto (2017)**
 - ▣ 'There is an alternative: *homines curans* and the limits of neoliberalism', *International Journal of Care & Caring*, Vol 1 (1) 27-43

Some theoretical framings (2)

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England: theories of care work

- **'Devaluation'** ('association with women')
- **'Public good'** ('indirect benefits')
- **'Prisoner of love'** (altruistic motivations / intrinsic rewards)
- **'Commodification of emotion'** ('alienates workers' true feelings')
- **'Love AND money'**-rejects dualism of selfish markets v altruistic family or informal care

Women's employment is *'here to stay'*. Much care will be given by family members, but much will also be provided by paid care workers. ***"How this sector is organized is consequential not just for gender, class, and race inequality, but for all of society"***

(England, P., 2005, p 396)

WBG: advocates for *'an economic strategy that values care'*

- **Invest** in social infrastructure
- **Improve the T&Cs** of the paid work force
- **Strengthen workers' rights** (whole economy)
- **Ensure access** to affordable care for all
- **Improve support** for those (mainly women) who provide unpaid care
- **Create a social security system** that shares caring and its costs more fairly

Tronto's conceptualisation of care

5 types: Caring

- **'about'** – noticing unmet care needs
- **'for'** – taking responsibility, to ensure needs are met
- **'caregiving'** – doing the actual work of caregiving
- **'receiving'** – observing and reacting to the recipient's response
- **'with'** – when groups (family, state, etc) are able to rely on an ongoing cycle of care, through which trust and solidarity are produced.

Some implications: future positive?

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Care Systems

- **Costs and contributions** – who pays?, who provides? Towards a fairer, gender equitable, distribution of costs and contributions
- **Beyond integration** (of health & social care); focus on ALL ‘pieces of the jigsaw’, and how they fit together:
 - ▣ Families and friends
 - ▣ Neighbourhoods and communities
 - ▣ Employers and employees
 - ▣ States, markets, innovators and entrepreneurs

The Work and Relationships of Care

- **Wellbeing for** – beyond ‘avoidance of harm’
- **Gender equitable distribution** (and resolution of other inequalities)
- **Interdependence** in families, communities and interpersonal relations
- **Individuality** - respect for individual autonomy
- **Quality jobs** as the foundation of quality services

*“A caring and sustainable economy is based on mutual support and respect for rights. It is oriented to the broad and inclusive aim of improving our well-being in ways that reduce inequalities, not only today, but also for future generations. **It prioritises care for people and for the planet.**”*

Women’s Budget Group (UK) 2016

Further information

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Professor Sue Yeandle: s.yeandle@sheffield.ac.uk

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